



Secretarial Business Development Mission to Focus on CAFTA-DR



On September 29-October 4, 2008, Secretary Gutierrez will lead a U.S. business delegation to the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, to explore opportunities arising from the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR). Last year, U.S. exports to the Central American and Caribbean region surpassed \$22 billion -- an impressive tally likely to increase as CAFTA-DR continues to eliminate most tariffs on U.S. exports.

When he announced the mission in June, Secretary Gutierrez stated that "CAFTA-DR is transforming the competitiveness of the Western Hemisphere in the global marketplace. Since implementation two years ago, the United States has reversed our previous trade deficit to a current trade surplus of \$3.7 billion in 2007 with the CAFTA-DR countries. CAFTA-DR has expanded openness and transparency in the region, which has improved the trade and investment climate for U.S. companies. I look forward to leading U.S. exporters on this business development mission to the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Costa Rica to capitalize on the opportunities that CAFTA-DR offers to U.S. industry and agriculture."

This Mission is designed to promote a cross section of U.S. industries with clear potential in the Costa Rican, Dominican Republic and Nicaraguan markets, particularly, though not exclusively, in the best U.S. export sectors for the region. Mission participants will benefit from customized on-site services and opportunities, including:

- Automotive Parts and Equipment
- Computer Equipment and Peripherals
- Construction Equipment and Building Products
- Electrical Power Generation and Distribution Equipment
- Education and Training
- Food Processing and Packaging Equipment
- Hardware
- Hotel and Restaurant Equipment
- General and Household Consumer Goods
- Medical Equipment
- Optical Equipment
- Plastics
- Printing and Graphic Arts Equipment
- Security and Safety Equipment and Services
- Telecommunications Equipment and Services
- Travel and Tourism Services

The application deadline to participate in this mission is July 31, 2008.

Full details and the on-line application are available on the event website:

<http://export.gov/CAFTADRMission>